

Stormwater Management

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Stormwater Management program are: protection of natural waterway environments; restoration of streams previously damaged by excessive erosion, sedimentation, and impaired water quality; and prevention or remediation of property damage caused by localized flooding. The Stormwater Management capital program contributes to attaining these objectives through: facility planning studies and the development of Watershed Restoration Action Plans; and the design and construction of stormwater retrofit projects, regional stormwater management facilities and stream restoration projects. These projects reduce pollution impacts on streams and manage peak runoff flows to reduce stream channel habitat and sedimentation damages from watershed development and urbanized areas. This intervention prevents flooding and reduces erosive velocities affecting stream channels. Project implementation helps fulfill requirements specified in the County's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) municipal stormwater discharge permit. Priorities for stream restoration are established through the Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS, February 2003).

The County Stormwater Management program is watershed-based and is proactive in nature. Mitigating problems caused by development prior to implementation of stringent stormwater management controls and proactive planning in the developing portions of the County are the two major County activities. Left uncontrolled, stormwater runoff from developed areas leads to erosion of stream banks, siltation and widening of stream channels, and localized flooding. Urbanization often destroys stream habitat, resulting in dramatic declines in the diversity of fish and other aquatic species. Urban runoff also adds to the pollution problem of downstream receiving waters in the Anacostia River, Patuxent River, Potomac River, and the Chesapeake Bay. Multi-state agreements, State legislation, and State programs emphasize the importance of watershed-based programs to protect aquatic habitat and reduce pollution in the Bay and its tributaries.

Since the early 1970s, the County has applied increasingly stringent stormwater management controls on new development. State and County laws make developers responsible for providing controls to manage stormwater runoff from new developments.

Developers can meet these requirements by building an on-site control facility serving only the developer's property, or by constructing a stormwater facility serving that property and other County drainage and receive reimbursement from the

County for that portion of the costs not directly related to the developer's property. Developers may request a waiver of on-site control requirements from the County when on-site stormwater management is determined by the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) to be infeasible or impractical. In these cases, developers pay stormwater waiver fees which the County uses to upgrade or add new stormwater controls and for stream restoration projects in watersheds draining previously developed areas.

Beginning in FY04, the County offered public maintenance services for qualified private stormwater facilities. All residential property and "associated non-residential" structures are eligible for County service. Property owners pay a Water Quality Protection Charge to fund the maintenance of these privately-owned structures as well as County-owned structures. This program will improve long-term operational effectiveness of these facilities and increase their pollution removal efficiency. Inspection and routine maintenance of facilities are funded in the Operating budget, and major structural repairs which require extensive engineering design and permitting are funded in the CIP.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Repair damaged stream channels and tributaries in stream valley parks and priority watersheds.
- Construct new and retrofit old stormwater management controls to prevent property damage, improve water quality, and protect habitat.
- Perform structural repairs for stormwater facilities funded through the Water Quality Protection Fund.
- Design and construct low impact stormwater management devices at County facilities.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Dan Harper of the Department of Environmental Protection at 240.777.7709 or Alexandra Shabelski of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2785 for more information regarding this department's capital budget.

CAPITAL PROGRAM REVIEW

Five ongoing projects and one new project, SM Retrofit – Government Facilities, are recommended for FY09-14 and described in detail in the Project Description Forms. The Recommended FY09-14 Stormwater Management Program totals \$30.9 million, an increase of \$6.1 million or 24.6 percent from the approved Amended FY07-12 program of \$24.8 million.